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ANNUAL REPORT

— :: TO THE :: —

Bedlingtonshire

URBAN DISTRICT COUNCIL,

-: For the Year 1927, :-

— :: BY :: —

 W. HUDSON, 

Medical Officer of Health.


Printed by Order of the Urban District Council.

:: BEDLINGTON ::

E. H. METCALF, PRINTER, &c., FRONT STREET,

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TO THE CHAIRMAN AND MEMBERS

OF THE

Bedlingtonshire Urban District Council.

MR. CHAIRMAN AND GENTLEMEN,

I have pleasure in submitting to you the report on the Health and Sanitary Condition of your district for the year 1927.

The Coal Stoppage with its aftermath has in many ways retarded progress in Sanitation during the year under consideration.

The financial position, not only relative to the country but to our local Industries, employers, employees and others alike, has delayed many measures of Sanitation and Hygiene which under ordinary circumstances would have been accomplished, and for this reason a considerable amount of sympathy has justly been extended to those who had to bear the financial burden.

In the question of Health the report furnishes us with information which is pleasing and acceptable, whilst in other respects the statistics are disappointing. To the former we associate the Death Rate of 11·7 per 1000 which is below that of England and Wales, the low Maternal Mortality Rate, and the decline in deaths from Tuberculosis. In the other category we deplore the rise of the Infantile Mortality Rate, but hope that the explanation offered will seek us to anticipate a fall to a level approaching that of previous years. We also hope that the L.A. will continue to build dwelling houses, for not only is this necessary to deal with overcrowding, but it must be remembered that many houses in the district are old and dilapidated and only afford a shelter until something better can be provided. We also expect that the Sewage System and Privy Midden Conversion will be accomplished in 1928, and thus abolish many undesirable conditions which bear nothing more than the mark of obselete Hygiene.

The Private Street Works will no doubt receive your attention at a suitable opportunity.

The measures now adopted for the improvement of Milk both in Cleanliness and Purity will certainly be of great benefit to all, and particularly to children who require it as a principal factor of their diet.

Area (acres)	...	...	9,025.784.
Population	...	...	29,100.
Number of Inhabited Houses, approx.			6,716.
Number of Families, approx.	...		6,823.
Rateable Value (April 1927)	...		£78,006 18/0.
Sum Represented by 1d. Rate	...		£325 7/0.
Rateable Value (October 1927)	...		£80,266 1/6.
Sum Represented by 1d. Rate	...		£334 8/10.

DEATH RATE.

During the year 301 deaths, 159 of males and 142 of females were registered. There were 44 Inward Transfers and 3 Outward Transfers. This makes a total of 342 deaths, 189 of males and 153 of females allocated to the district, and is equivalent to an Annual Death Rate of 11·7 per 1000.

SUMMARY OF DEATHS FOR THE YEAR 1927.

	Netherton Ward		Bedlington Ward		Sleekburn Ward		Cambois Ward		W. Sleekburn Ward		Choppington Ward		Total.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
January ...	0	0	7	3	2	3	2	1	1	2	2	2	14	11
February ...	2	1	4	3	8	5	2	1	4	0	2	2	22	12
March ...	0	0	14	7	8	16	2	0	0	1	3	6	27	30
April ...	1	0	4	5	2	3	0	0	1	1	2	7	10	16
May ...	0	0	6	1	5	6	2	0	0	0	1	1	14	8
June ...	2	1	2	1	4	3	1	0	1	0	0	2	10	7
July ...	2	0	4	3	1	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	8	7
August ..	0	1	2	2	3	3	0	2	2	1	3	1	10	10
September ...	0	1	4	2	2	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	7	4
October ...	2	0	4	6	3	2	0	1	1	0	4	4	14	13
November ...	3	2	2	1	1	2	1	0	1	1	5	2	13	8
December ...	0	2	1	8	2	2	0	2	3	0	4	2	10	16
	12	8	54	42	41	46	10	8	14	6	28	32	159	142

BIRTH RATE.

During the year 600 births, 317 of boys and 283 of girls were registered, of these 304 boys and 276 girls within the district. This included 20 illegitimate births, 8 of boys and 12 of girls, and is equivalent to an Annual Birth Rate of 20·6 per 1000.

SUMMARY OF BIRTHS FOR THE YEAR 1927.

	Netherton Ward		Bedlington Ward		Sleekburn Ward		Cambois Ward		W. Sleekburn Ward		Choppington Ward		Total.	
	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G	B	G
January ...	0	2	17	9	4	7	3	1	2	4	6	3	32	26
February ...	3	1	12	4	5	5	0	3	2	0	7	2	29	15
March ...	4	1	17	10	5	15	5	4	7	0	4	3	42	33
April ...	4	2	7	7	4	3	1	2	2	6	5	5	23	25
May ...	0	2	8	8	5	4	0	1	0	1	7	9	20	25
June ...	0	3	10	14	9	5	0	1	0	0	8	5	27	28
July ...	2	1	6	1	5	5	3	1	0	2	1	5	17	21
August ...	1	2	7	5	4	7	5	2	3	1	5	3	25	20
September ..	0	3	5	6	2	4	2	2	0	0	10	7	19	22
October ...	3	1	7	7	7	10	3	0	0	1	6	2	26	21
November ...	1	1	5	5	7	7	4	0	1	2	7	7	25	19
December ..	0	1	6	5	3	5	3	2	3	1	4	7	19	21
	18	20	107	88	60	73	29	19	20	18	70	58	304	276

GENERAL CONSIDERATION OF THE DEATH TABLE.

The Death Rate of 11·7 is very favourable for an Industrial Area and compares satisfactorily with the Death Rate of 12·3 for England and Wales. The outstanding feature is the large number of deaths from Influenza, Broncho Pneumonia and Bronchitis, in all 85 being approximately $\frac{1}{4}$ of the deaths for the whole year. These deaths occurred almost entirely in the months of February, March, and early April, during which Virulent and Complicated Influenza was prevalent. Had we not encountered this epidemic it is evident that our General Death Rate would have been remarkably low.

The death rate for Tuberculosis as seen in the table shows a drop to the lowest previous record in 1925, and is probably not the result of the effects of Sanatorium treatment but the decrease in the incidence of other forms of Tuberculosis.

The death rate from Cancer shows an increase, 28 deaths in all, 15 of males and 13 of females. Only 6 deaths were attributed to Cancer of the Uterus, and at ages varying from 41 to 75 years. Deaths from Cancer of the Stomach seemed to occur at an earlier life than that of the other abdominal organs, particularly Rectal Cancer. One interesting condition of Cancer accounted for a death at 14 years of age.

A few deaths from the disease occurred in the very advanced years of life, and it is reasonable to consider that malignant disease is more common in advanced life but so chronic in its nature as not to afford a ready means of diagnosis, and probably does not at that time of life produce any distinctive signs or symptoms.

The epidemic of Enteric Fever resulted in 2 deaths.

DEATH RATE PER 1000 POPULATION OF CANCER & TUBERCULOSIS.

Deaths from	1920	1921	1922	1923	1924	1925	1926	1927
Cancer ...	19	32	23	25	24	28	18	28
Tuberculosis	35	51	38	39	40	26	35	28
Death Rates per 1000 population.								
Cancer ...	·7	1·1	·8	·9	·85	·97	·61	·96
Tuberculosis	1·3	1·9	1·3	1·4	1·4	·9	1·2	·96

	Death Rates.	Birth Rates.	Infantile Mortality Rates.
1927	11·7	20·6	101·6
1926	10·9	24·00	69·5
1925	11·00	24·00	87
1924	12·4	25·8	100
1923	11·27	25	86
1922	11·26	26·3	73
1921	12·79	28·9	95
1920	13·17	32·4	105

THE CAUSES OF DEATH AT THE VARIOUS PERIODS OF LIFE
UNDER ONE YEAR.

CAUSE OF DEATH.	Under 1 Week.	1—2 Weeks.	2—3 Weeks.	3—4 Weeks.	Total under 1 month.	1—3 Months.	3—6 Months.	6—9 Months.	9—12 Months.	Total Deaths under One Year.
Bronchitis				1	1	3	2	2		8
Pneumonia						4	4	5	6	19
Congenital Malformation	5				5					5
Convulsions	1				1	1		2		4
Infective Enteritis						1	1			2
Meningitis									1	1
Acute Polio Encephalitis								1		1
Debility from Birth	2	1	1		4	2			1	7
Marasmus							2	1		3
Prematurity	6				6	1				7
Disease of Parturition	1				1					1
Laryngismus Stridulus							1			1
Other Causes				1	1			1		2
TOTALS	15	1	1	2	19	12	10	12	8	61

INFANTILE MORTALITY.

The Infantile Mortality Rate has returned to the figure of 101·6 per 1000. This is disappointing, and had it not been for the large number of deaths from Pneumonia and Bronchitis, complicating Influenza—27 out of a total of 61 under one year—in the months of February and March, and circumstances which could not altogether be termed preventable then there is little doubt that our Infantile Mortality Rate would have been even lower than that of last year.

In referring to the unusual large number of deaths from Influenza, Pneumonia, Bronchitis and other diseases of the Respiratory Tract at all ages, and considering that during the months of February and March there is evidence that a very virulent and fatal form of Pneumonia complicated the Influenza and accounted for many of the deaths in infants and adults, and those who were robust and healthy. It cannot be said that any lowering of resistance by conditions associated with the Coal Stoppage in any way affected the number of deaths. On the contrary the report of 1926 clearly proved by the Infantile Mortality Rate and the causes of death in infants, that malnutrition was unusually significant by its almost complete absence. The district was unfortunately struck by a wave of Virulent Influenza which prevailed in February and March, and disappeared with almost the same suddenness as it appeared, and exacted a heavy toll of young and old, feeble and strong alike. However we do find some consolation in the gradual reduction of Infant Deaths in what may be termed preventable, these being conditions of Prematurity, Debility from Birth and Marasmus.

The following table shows the increased number of deaths in Infants from Pneumonia and the gradual fall in the number of deaths from other diseases mentioned above.

Year.	No. of Infant Deaths.	Number of deaths from Pneumonia, Bronchitis, etc.	% of deaths from Pneumonia, Bronchitis, etc.	No. of deaths from Prematurity, Debility and Marasmus.	% of deaths from Prematurity, Debility & Marasmus.
1927	61	27	45	17	28.3
1926	49	13	18.4	21	29.6
1925	60	14	18.8	25	30.5
1924	74	15	20.2	29	39.2

ALLOCATION OF ZYMOTIC DEATHS IN THE VARIOUS SUB-DISTRICTS.

	Netherton	Bedlington	W. Sleekburn	Sleekburn	Choppington.	Cambois	Totals
Enteric Fever ...	0	0	0	0	2	0	2
Small Pox ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Measles ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Scarlet Fever ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diphtheria and Croup ...	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Diarrhœa (under 2 years) ...	0	0	0	1	2	0	3
Totals ...	0	0	0	1	4	0	5

PREVALENCE OF INFECTIOUS DISEASES DURING THE YEAR 1927.

Totals.	Puerperal Fever.	Puerperal Pyrexia.	Pneumonia.	Scarlet Fever.	Erysipelas.	Pulmonary Tuberculosis.	Tuberculosis : Other Forms.	Diphtheria.	Small Pox.	Enteric Fever.	Summer Diarrhœa.	Ophthalmia Neonatorum.	Encephalitis Lethargica.	Polio-myelitis.
Jan. ... 20	1	0	10	6	2	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Feb. ... 37	0	0	27	2	1	5	1	1	0	0	0	0	0	0
Mar. ... 46	0	0	37	2	0	3	2	0	1	1	0	0	0	0
April ... 27	0	2	14	1	0	7	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0
May ... 31	0	0	8	6	1	3	1	0	12	0	0	0	0	0
June ... 21	0	1	4	3	0	3	4	1	5	0	0	0	0	0
July ... 17	0	0	6	3	1	3	0	0	2	1	1	0	0	0
Aug. ... 25	0	0	5	5	1	5	1	0	0	0	6	1	1	0
Sept. ... 59	0	2	8	21	0	6	1	0	0	8	12	0	1	0
Oct. ... 50	0	0	8	27	1	3	3	0	1	6	0	0	0	1
Nov. ... 27	0	1	8	10	0	4	2	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Dec. ... 40	0	0	18	10	2	2	2	3	2	0	0	1	0	0
Totals 400	1	6	153	96	9	44	18	5	26	17	19	2	3	1

Influenza and Pneumonia appeared in Epidemic Form in the early part of February. At first of a mild type it gradually increased in infectivity and virulence, and these simultaneously until it had reached its maximum about the end of March. There was then a gradual defervescence and terminated in the middle of April. Influenza of an uncomplicated type again appeared in December, but was short lived. 153 cases of Pneumonia were notified during the year.

Measles.—A few cases occurred in January and February but never became widespread.

Scarlet Fever.—96 cases were notified with no deaths. The cases occurred in every month of the year and were, generally speaking, of a very mild nature and this probably accounted for the continuance of the cases.

Diphtheria.—5 sporadic cases were notified during the year, all of a mild type with no deaths. Neither Scarlet Fever or Diphtheria cases are removed to Hospital, and the Shick and Dick Test has not been applied.

Whooping Cough occurred in February, was of a mild form and resulted in 1 death.

Erysipelas.—9 cases were notified during the year.

Encephalitis Lethargica.—3 sporadic cases occurred in different parts of the district with two deaths. In these two deaths the notification preceded the deaths only by a short interval.

Polio Encephalitis.—One case was notified and one death.

Small Pox.—26 cases were notified during the year and at different parts of the district. These were largely the result of primary untreated cases. In every instance Vaccination and Revaccination of Contacts resulted in no secondary cases. It is unnecessary to labour the protective powers of Vaccination but it is regrettable that this cannot be appreciated by those who know nothing of Small Pox as it is by those who have had experience in the disease.

Summer Diarrhoea.—19 cases were notified during the year and many unnotified cases were attended by the Health Visitors in their out-door work.

Enteric Fever.—During the year 17 cases were notified. All these responded to the Blood Reaction of *Bacillus Typhosus* with the exception of one case and the only one in the district which was *Paratyphosus B*. In another part of the district one case of *Bacillus Typhosus* which had no association with the outbreak was secondary to a chronic carrier in the household. The remaining 15 cases occurred at all ages and in both sexes, and its limitations were defined both by the district in which it occurred and the Milk Supply. Measures taken to prevent a person who had Enteric Fever 6 years previously and whose Blood Reaction was positive, from handling the Milk Vessels and Milk soon brought about a cessation of the cases.

The Epidemic was therefore Milk Borne and the milk was secured from outside the district. A full report was presented to the Council in November and a copy forwarded to the Ministry of Health.

Ophthalmia Neonatorum.—2 cases were notified during the year, and attended by the Health Visitors with complete recovery.

Puerperal Fever and Pyrexia.—One case of the former and six of the latter were notified, and the necessary measures adopted according to the Regulations. Reference will be further made under the Maternity & Child Welfare Report.

Tuberculosis.—62 cases of Pulmonary and other forms were notified during the year. This shows a decline since 1923.

Cases treated in Sanatoria :—

Cases admitted 1926 and discharged 1927	...	...	...	17
" " and discharged 1927	...	...	...	13
" " 1927 and undergoing treatment	...	...	...	25
				—
				55

NEW CASES AND MORTALITY DURING 1927, IN ACCORDANCE WITH QUARTERLY RETURNS.

Age.	NEW CASES.				DEATHS.			
	Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.		Pulmonary.		Non-Pulmonary.	
	M	F	M	F	M	F	M	F
0—1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
1—5	2	0	3	3	0	0	1	1
5—10	1	1	4	2	1	0	0	0
10—15	2	3	1	0	1	1	0	0
15—20	6	1	0	1	1	1	0	0
20—25	3	5	1	1	1	2	0	0
25—35	2	4	0	0	5	3	0	0
35—45	6	3	2	0	0	0	0	0
45—55	3	0	0	0	1	1	0	0
55—65	1	0	0	0	1	0	0	0
65 & over	0	1	0	0	0	1	0	0
Totals ...	26	18	11	7	11	9	1	1

INCIDENCE OF PULMONARY AND OTHER FORMS OF TUBERCULOSIS.

Year.	Population.	Pulmonary Cases.	Rate per 1000 Population.	Other Forms.	Rate per 1000 Population.
1921	26880	22	·81	33	1·2
1922	27420	17	·62	23	·83
1923	27750	13	·47	42	1·5
1924	28230	46	1·6	31	1·09
1925	28630	45	1·5	29	1·01
1926	29040	54	1·8	21	·72
1927	29100	44	1·5	18	·62

These tables show a gradual increase in the occurrence of Pulmonary Tuberculosis which may now have reached its high water mark, and a gradual decline in the incidence of other forms of the disease. We have thus reason to consider that measures which have been adopted to give a supply of Pure

Milk and the warnings sent out to the Public regarding the dangers of Tuberculous Milk are now beginning to have effect, whilst the constant menace of Overcrowding, the housing of advanced cases of Pulmonary Tuberculosis under conditions which seldom afford thorough isolation, and the return home of incurable and highly infectious cases from Sanatoria, together with the inadequate accommodation for treatment in Sanatoria in the earliest stage of the disease and immediately application is made for treatment are all circumstances which assist in maintaining the high incidence of Pulmonary Tuberculosis.

No action was taken by the L.A. under Section 62 of the P.H. Act 1925 or P.H. (Prevention of Tuberculosis) Regulations, 1925.

HOSPITALS.

Stakeford	...	...	Isolation Hospital.
Staith Quay	...		Infectious Diseases Hospital.

The Royal Victoria Infirmary and Fleming Memorial Hospital, Newcastle-on-Tyne are the general hospitals which meet the requirements of the district and a Motor Ambulance Service in connection with the different Collieries is available. The L.A. provides an ambulance for Infectious Diseases.

Tuberculosis Dispensary ... Lintonville Terrace, Ashington.

V.D. Clinic ... Royal Victoria Infirmary, Newcastle-on-Tyne.

There is no change in the Nursing arrangements of the district since the last report.

In matters educational lectures on Industrial Diseases were given by the National Education Health Society, and the Wooley Sanatorium Magazine still continues to be distributed monthly.

MATERNITY AND CHILD WELFARE.

Apart from removal to new premises for the Stakeford Centre there has not been any change in this service.

The Coal Stoppage and resultant unemployment has increased the demand for Dried Milk and each application has been considered by the M. & C. Welfare Committee and according to the present Scale of Income.

The gradual fall in the number of Infant Deaths from causes which can be deemed preventable and come within the scope of the Maternity and Child Welfare is evidence of the value of the work.

I have again to thank all members of the Maternity and Child Welfare Welfare Committee and the voluntary workers at the various centres for the interest they have shown and the assistance afforded throughout the year.

An Annual donation of Five Pounds has been granted to the Osborne Road Hostel, Newcastle-on-Tyne, which provides for the maintenance of unmarried expectant mothers, and looks to the welfare of mother and child afterwards.

ANTE NATAL WORK.

I should like to preface the report of Dr. Harvey Evers, the Ante Natal Officer, with a few of the important points in connection with the scheme which is now one year old.

It is gratifying to know that mothers are now realising the value of Ante Natal examination, and the anticipated resentment to the treatment is fast passing away from their minds. I also wish to thank the doctors in the district for the interest they have displayed and the manner in which they have recognised the value of the work, not only to themselves but to their patients. We feel very pleased to announce that out of 600 births during the year, including those occurring in the district and at the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital, there was not a single Maternal Death.

All maternity cases in the district are attended by the District Nurses in conjunction with the doctor who is thus called in earlier than he would be under the Midwives Act, and he is therefore able to deal with complications at a time when they can be more easily dealt with. We have no Certified Midwives practising in the district and there is no question that a system in which every expectant mother has a doctor and nurse in attendance at Child Birth together with an ante natal examination by her doctor are the only means by which we can expect to reduce Maternal Mortality. As well as trained and qualified as midwives may be their knowledge has its limitations and there is a great danger of accepting too much responsibility in irregular cases and thus not affording the patient that early skilled medical attention which may make all the difference between recovery and loss of the mother.

The arrangement this Local Authority has made with the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital for treatment of Complicated and Necessitous cases of Labour has undoubtedly been the means of saving the mother's life in the serious cases. The deficiency in payment to the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital for different reasons in such necessitous cases has only amounted to the sum of £44.

We also must not forget the skill and untiring interest displayed by Dr. Evers and his association with the P. M. Maternity Hospital is also an additional help to the work.

PUERPERAL FEVER AND PUERPERAL PYREXIA.

One case of Puerperal Fever and six cases of Puerperal Pyrexia were notified. One of the cases of Pyrexia would have been better termed Puerperal Fever. One case of the former and two of the latter were removed to the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital in accordance with our arrangements with the Institution. There were no deaths.

One is rather surprised when the country is reeking with Puerperal Sepsis and Midwifery not so skilled as it should be, that in an industrial area we can claim such a low Maternal Mortality.

It is necessary to mention the ambiguity of the term Puerperal Pyrexia. No useful purpose can be served by the notification of all cases of Pyrexia during the Puerperium. Puerperal Pyrexia should not include a rise of temperature in which there is no reason to consider that the cause is not due to Puerperal Infection.

REPORT OF ANTE NATAL CLINIC, 1927.

M.O.H. Bedlington Urban District Council.

As I pointed out last year, Bedlington is the fortunate possessor of an excellently organised Maternity Scheme. Every parturient woman has the services of both a doctor and a trained nurse. The general practitioners, having full control of all midwifery in the district, do all their own pre-natal supervision—and only by such supervision can the serious complications and difficulties of midwifery be foreseen and prevented. This arrangement is, to my mind, ideal—and its universal adoption throughout the country would be of incalculable benefit to the community in general and to the mothers in particular.

As the natural result of such a scheme, the Ante-Natal Clinic is only called upon to act in a purely consultative capacity, and its work is therefore in no way comparable to that of an ordinary Public Clinic in a large city, where much of the routine supervision of normal cases is carried on.

All the cases I have seen have been referred to me by practitioners in the area ; and over 50 per cent. of them had gross abnormalities requiring expert opinion and treatment. 49 expectant mothers came to the Clinic, the total attendances being 71. The abnormal conditions found included 3 cases of Albinuria, 6 of Contracted Pelvis, 2 of Vaginal Discharge, 3 of Antepartum Haemorrhage, 3 of Repeated Miscarriages or Stillbirths, and 2 of Breech Presentation. In all 14 cases were sent to the Princess Mary Maternity Hospital, and of these, 3 of the 9 abnormal cases required Caesarean Section.

H. HARVEY EVERS,

M.B.M.S., F.R.C.S.

GENERAL SANITARY REPORT.

Our position in this respect has shown little change since last report. The tables furnished by the Sanitary Inspector will show that a considerable amount of various improvements have been undertaken, but the Sewage Scheme, the Privy Midden Conversions, and the Demolition of the Insanitary Area at the East End are still being held up.

The Council are still hopeful that for the two former schemes some assistance will be afforded by the Unemployment Grants Committee, but should this fail it will then be necessary to seek a loan. Both schemes are long delayed and urgently needed. They will enable the abolition of the Open Channels, an antiquated form of sanitation which still exists in certain parts of the district.

The East End Insanitary Area has been scheduled and the Council now awaits a move by the Ministry.

HOUSING.

Housing progress has been continued during the year by the completion of the scheme of 150 houses for the Choppington and Guide Post area, and the erection of 50 houses for the Cambois district.

In the different districts Housing conditions are not what they should be, although the provision of houses by the Council has had a marked effect on reducing overcrowding and making it possible for some of the old dilapidated properties to be closed and others to be reconstructed. Much remains to be done to bring the general living conditions up to present day standards of construction and healthy surroundings.

With the completion of the sites named the total number of houses built by the Local Authority since 1920 is 454 which together with the houses built by Private Enterprise viz. 387 makes a total of 841.

The Council has further decided to erect 50 houses near Netherton Colliery, and principally of a type to accommodate large families, and but for the unfortunate depression in the Coal Industry active operations would have been commenced. The site has been selected and the terms of purchase provisionally agreed subject to the provision of suitable and adequate sewerage accommodation, this being promised by the construction of a new outfall sewer to tidal waters, and this is at present awaiting the approval and sanction of the Ministry.

During the year there has been a falling off in building by Private Enterprise and it is probable that until the wave of depression now effecting the district has passed away there is little hope of anything more than a few houses being erected.

The Council decided that in view of the reduction in the subsidy by the Ministry to reduce the grant for private enterprise by £25 making the sum now payable £50 instead of £75 as previously.

It is not anticipated that this will deter persons desirous of building houses for themselves from doing so as soon as the Industrial Situation improves and the district returns to something like its past prosperity.

The Council like most Local Authorities has had its difficulties in payment of Rent and Rates. Large arrears have accumulated and with a view to a more effective collection of Rates in particular, the Housing Committee has decided for 12 months as an experiment to charge an inclusive rent. These arrangements will commence on April 1st, and it is hoped that fortnightly requests for the rates included with the rent, instead of the half-yearly demand for the former will not only ease the burden of the tenant but yield a higher collection of both rent and rates. The Housing Committee have also had before them the question of subletting (except in special circumstances) and have decided that these conditions should terminate in April of 1928. From

a hygienic standpoint subletting is not to be recommended, and in almost every case it leads to overcrowding and the use of bedrooms for purposes of cooking and sleeping. It is again regrettable to find that tenants in subletting have not sought the consent of the Housing Committee, but even in some cases have not been content with one subtenant. Then again some have regularly received payment of rent from the subtenant, and very frequently this has been a sum closely approaching the rent of the house, and even with the addition of rent from the Coal Companies these tenants have flagrantly allowed their arrears to accumulate to an amount which they will never be able to pay.

CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS.

- (1) That the Local Authority should take immediate steps to deal with the Sewage System and Privy Midden Conversions.
- (2) Press forward the Demolition of the Insanitary Area at East End.
- (3) Consider the alteration to the Staith Quay Hospital.
- (4) When the time is opportune consider the making up of Back Streets under the Private Street Works Act.

I again beg to thank the Chairman and Members of the Council who have assisted me in the carrying out of the duties of my office.

W. HUDSON,

M.D., D.P.H.

THE SANITARY INSPECTOR'S REPORT, 1927.

HOUSING.

The inspection of dwellings as required by the Public Health Acts, Housing Acts together with Housing Consolidated Act are enumerated in tabular form further in this report. After inspection every effort has been introduced to bring the existing houses within a fit state of repair and fitness, and much recommendable work has been performed.

On account of the very depressive times which are prevailing the financial position of both owner and occupier has not been overlooked, and close consideration given with respect to the age, class and locality of all properties. At the same time reasonableness, where several dwellings have come under inspection with the heading of one ownership, time has not been limited where it was acknowledged the repairs were intended to be carried out.

The Local Authority has also rendered every assistance to meet all circumstances, and called for remedies of dilapidation where aggravated insanitary conditions were reported.

In the case of old houses repeated defects occur, and it is to be hoped with the assistance of future building operations becoming accelerated this class of property will be taken up, reported upon, as being unfit and gradually closed. The programme for prospective building has been referred to in the preceding pages of the report.

Although new houses have been erected a relief to overcrowding has to a certain extent been evident in some parts of the district, but there is much improvement to be desired in this direction.

As the number of houses are growing the population is on the increase.

Under the Public Health Acts overcrowding is considered a grave nuisance, whether it be estimated through cubic space, floor space or number of persons occupying one common room it is found impossible to deal with the question until more houses are provided.

Houses are frequently visited having one or two rooms each, and it is within these premises increased dilapidations are often observed, and may be caused through excessive family numbers. This class of tenant when approached is continually calling out for houses with an economic rent, and property of this description should be relieved as soon as any opportune time arrives. There are dwellings where external parts should be adjusted, such as surface paving and drainage, and one often finds on the routine of inspection much depression and dampness to property caused through these evils, particularly houses of the older class. Uneven and unpaved surface frontages directing the surface water into the foundations, and some of the sanitary principles of the building at the ground floors such as ventilation and damp proof courses become affected, the drainage becomes interrupted, and this to my mind has been one of the principle factors nourishing many dilapidations.

Damp houses with leaking roofs, damp and defective main walls, dilapidated windows, floors, and chimney breasts, even in some cases the tie beams leaving the wall places, have been noticed during the inspections.

Where the houses have been closed the property did not justify the expenditure for good repair, and the defects were more or less cumulative.

Housing surveys under the Housing Acts have been carried out at Bedlington, Netherton, Choppington, Scotland Gate, Sleekburn, Stakeford, Guide Post and Cambois, made up as follows :—

Bedlington	...	27.	Netherton	...	24.
Sleekburn	...	89.	Cambois	...	2.
Choppington, Scotland Gate, Stakeford, Guide Post—119. Total 261.					

Other inspections have been completed under the Public Health Acts.

The demolition of the houses at Scotland Gate has cleared away many defects. These premises principally consisted of houses with one and two rooms each, some were back to back, overcrowded, damp, and in other cases the structures were in a decayed condition, the sanitary accommodation being very primitive. The owners were called upon to remedy defects but decided to close and demolish as soon as the tenants vacated ; and plans have been deposited with the Local Authority for other houses to be erected on the land site.

Six houses have been closed within Bell's Place, Bedlington, and the vacation of these premises have not up to the present been fulfilled, as each tenant is awaiting for accommodation. This property consists of one room each, the roofs are very dilapidated and damp walls exist, the internal structures are defective and three of these have no through ventilation.

Two houses have been closed at Cambois and vacated through defective structures and damp conditions.

Six houses are closed and vacated at Netherton voluntarily, and these probably will be placed again into a fit state by the owners and re-occupied.

At Clayton Street, Bedlington Station, four houses are vacated being back to back, occurring after inspection. Within the same street the whole of the back to back dwellings have been inspected, the number defective from various causes being 43. After consideration of the report by the Local Authority, together with all circumstances respecting the shortage of time for the expiration of leases held by the different owners, it was decided to approach the Agent, and a layout plan is now deposited for a new scheme in the near future.

At East Sleekburn one new farm dwelling has been erected substituting the original which was composed of stone work and very damp. The dwelling was really beyond any standard rental, and pressure through the Local Authority was brought upon the owner, till it was decided to close and provide the new accommodation.

SCAVENGING AND REFUSE DISPOSAL.

This work is chiefly done by contract with covered open carts. Out of the district 531 houses are done by employed datal work and divided among the various carters within the district at cleansing time. All the dwellings with bins consisting of 883 are cleansed three times per week. Where the common privy ashpits exist some are done monthly, some fortnightly, and some weekly, the time being varied according to the size of the receptacle, the position of the receptacle, and the number of persons using same.

The refuse is generally carted upon land for agricultural purposes and within open brickyard excavations.

During the year the work, although let by contract has never been much behind, and very few complaints have been received.

As excrement and refuse disposal is one of the most prime duties to be fulfilled by a Local Authority and contained within the P.H. Acts for the preservation of Public Health, this Council at the time of letting these contracts has given every consideration to the class of contractor, and to his or her capability so that the work be done efficiently. Attention has also been directed to the position of deposit and the mode of disposal.

WATER SUPPLY.

The supply is constant and no actual storage exists. In some cases the public supply is distributed through standpipes supplying a given number of houses, and when the privy conversion becomes operative the establishing of private house connections should be introduced. With regard to health this is most important as containers kept within dwellings for any length of time cannot escape being contaminated.

DRAINAGE.

Foul and choked drains are time and time again found and this is more or less prevalent in the locality of unpaved surfaces. Several dwellings have open channels as the means of drainage for surface and slop waters, the substituting by sanitary drains and gullies should be recommended at the time of conversions.

About 300 yards of sanitary drains have been renewed.

SANITARY CONVENIENCES.

The majority consist of privies and middens. Constructional defects have occurred and have been remedied.

The number of water closets in the table of conversions, together with the introduction of bins, have been carried out at full cost by the owners. Where bins have been attached to dwellings this improvement has been principally done to correct the objectionable nuisance produced by the wheeling out of ashpit refuse within hand barrows, and depositing the same on main thoroughfares before collection. The Glebe Row, Bedlington, and Byron Street, Guide Post, have been the chief parts of the district affected. No difficulty has been experienced with the owners for this sanitary improvement.

INFECTIOUS DISEASES AND DISINFECTION.

Dwellings have been regularly disinfected and fumigated after disease. The schools have been disinfected twice during the year. Systematic disinfection is carried out during the year with regard to privy middens, refuse receptacles and drainage.

No. of Schools disinfected	..	...	34.
„ Dwellings „	...	...	211.

COMMON LODGING HOUSES.

Two exist and frequent inspections are made.

MILK AND DAIRIES ORDER.

No additions to the register have been made during the year.

Milk Producers	...	...	...	...	44
Purveyors who are not producers	..	...	...	...	15
Approximate number of cows kept	...	...	...	...	512

As shown in the tabulated form regular inspections have been made, and sanitary improvements in several cases have been carried out. The water supply at each shed is constant, and where it is not within the shed the service is in close proximity. The value of each cow having its own drinking fountain has been pointed out, and many of the producers are establishing these within the shed.

There is gradual improvement with respect to the cleansing of sheds and utensils, and the keeping of the cows in a clean condition. Many of the producers deserve credit for the manner in which they have conducted the regular cleansing and grooming of animals, and in this direction the improvement has been considerable. The result of this practice when once introduced into the herd is sure to be increased production of milk.

No animal has been reported with clinical signs of disease.

With respect to the 'bacteriological' test which is now in operation throughout the district, and introduced by the County Medical Officer, who is prepared to give every assistance to the district Local Authority and cowkeepers for the elimination of T.B. cows it behoves every cowkeeper with a well kept herd that care should be taken when adding to this herd any other animal or animals for the production of milk for sale unless these animals themselves have been subjected to the test and accepted as free from disease.

Improvements.—Blue House Farm. 20 yards of 6" drain with gullies.

Cambois Farm. Automatic fountains in three sheds serving 36 cows. Three water taps within sheds and service together with waste preventor. The electric light has been introduced in each shed.

Broadway House Farm. New dairy provided, the roof of cowshed stripped and renewed and the lighting improved.

Whinney Hill Farm. Automatic fountains at the heads of 6 cows.

East Farm, Choppington.—Flagged floor with channel taken up and substituted by concrete together with drainage, the roof, stalls and lighting improved for 8 cows, and a new dairy provided with hot and cold water services.

North Farm, Choppington. The lighting improved.

West End, Bedlington. Internal walls of shed cement rendered.

Red Row Farm. Part main walls renewed, roofs repaired, at one shed lighting improved, floor concreted, and water fountains introduced for 5 cows. Water supply brought within the byres. Water closet has been substituted in place of privy. The drainage all renewed—110 yards of sanitary pipes with gullies and sceptic chamber improved.

Front Street, East End. Automatic fountain for 3 cows.

West Sleekburn Farm. Automatic water fountain introduced for 36 cows.

Bomarsund Farm. New dairy and 16 automatic fountains introduced into 3 sheds.

East Sleekburn Farm. New dairy with water supply has been provided.

Within the last two years the approximate estimated and given cost has amounted to about £2000 on improvements and repair work.

Slaughter Houses.—Number on register ... 17.

These premises have been kept in good condition during the year. As far as possible the majority of the animals slaughtered have been examined. No special notice has been received with respect to the slaughtering of any diseased carcase. The butchers are keeping well up to the standard in the choice of animals free from disease, and the dressing of cowbeef appears to be a thing of the past with them. No emergency case has appeared. Every assistance has been given during inspection. At one slaughter house at Sleekburn the yard has been all reconcreted and the drains renewed, and the slaughter house improved.

Meat has been condemned on account of Tuberculosis and decomposition. Organs have been condemned through the presence of Destoma, Hepatacum, and local abscesses. One whole carcase (heifer) was condemned through Generalised T.B., indications found in the organs and glands within the Thoracic and Lumbar Regions

Stones destroyed—Beef	...	...	119.
Organs destroyed—Various	...	...	47.
Cottage Pigs examined	...	...	73.

There has been no evidence of disease, probably accounted for by no milk or offal feeding. Particulars with respect to the premises for the purposes of handling and dressing have been observed during the inspections.

CHIEF REPAIRS EXECUTED.

HOUSING.

Nature,	Bedlington	Netherton	Choppington	Sleekburn	Guide Post	Stakeford	Total.
Roofs renewed ..	15	0	3	0	6	0	24
Roofs repaired ...	27	31	21	7	29	9	124
Main Walls repaired	6	4	11	3	7	1	32
Floors renewed ..	15	3	13	7	17	3	58
Floors repaired ...	6	4	10	11	11	7	49
Windows renewed	7	0	17	4	16	2	46
Windows repaired	13	11	21	13	11	7	76
Fire Breasts ...	5	13	9	7	5	5	44
Spouting renewed...	21	7	23	4	6	8	69
Spouting repaired...	4	11	3	11	12	8	49
Plastering ...	9	5	18	15	13	3	63
Foodstores repaired	9	21	13	0	0	0	43
Sculleries repaired	6	23	0	0	3	0	32
General repairs ...	13	13	27	21	17	21	112
Yards paved ...	3	0	1	1	1	12	18
Drains repaired ...	6	0	7	2	5	12	32
Totals ...	165	146	197	106	159	98	871

Two Insanitary Private Urinals have been renewed.

Repairs are outstanding—Netherton, Bank Top, Bedlington, and Stakeford.

On inspection many voluntary repairs are being carried out.

SUMMARY OF WORK EFFECTED.

	After letter or interview.	After Informal notice.	After Statutory notice.	TOTAL.
SANITARY CONVENIENCES.				
Privies abolished ...	18	6		24
„ repaired ..	51			51
Privy ashpits abolished ..	38	11		49
„ „ roofed or repaired	169			169
Pail closets abolished ...				
Water closets provided ...	18	6		24
„ „ repaired ...	17			17
Sanitary bins provided ...	49			49
„ „ renewed ...				
DRAINAGE,				
New drains constructed				
Drains repaired or recon- structed ..	18	6		24
Additional gullies provided	7			7
Old gullies replaced ...	4			4
Scullery sinks provided ...	5			5
„ waste-pipes repaired	18			18
„ „ „ trapped				
Yards repaired or recon- structed ...	16			16

FACTORIES, WORKSHOPS AND WORKPLACES.

Premises.		Inspections.	Written Notices.
Factories (including Factory Laundries)	...	45	5
Workshops (including Workshop Laundries)	..	31	2
Workplaces (other than Outworkers' premises)	...	41	0
Totals		117	7

NUISANCES UNDER THE PUBLIC HEALTH ACTS.

Want of Cleanliness	No. found—2	No. remedied—2
Other Nuisances	do. 5	do. 5
Totals	7	7

HOUSING (CONSOLIDATED) REGULATIONS, 1925.

(Tabular Statement as required by Article 31).

	TOTAL.	SUB-DISTRICTS.				
		Bedling- ton.	Sleek- burn.	Chopp- ington.	Nether- ton.	Cambois
No. of dwelling houses inspected	261	27	89	119	24	2
No. considered "unfit for habitation"	163	12	74	57	18	2
Complaints as to { Householders "unfitness" by { Parish Councils						
Closing { No. of Representations to L.A. ...	163	12	74	57	18	2
Orders { No. of Orders made	9	6		1		2
{ No. determined after repair ...	1			1		
No. of { After 'Informal Notice'	51	6	13	32		
houses { ,, Notice under Sec. 3	12				12	
made { ,, Closing Order made						
fit for { By L.A. in default of						
hab'tn { owner ...						
No. of houses { After 'Notice	21			15	6	
closed { under Sec. 3	4		4			
voluntarily { Without 'Notice'						
No. of { Under "Demolition						
houses { Orders" ...						
demolished { Voluntarily by	15			15		
{ Owners ...						

General character of defects—Back to Back conditions, Dampness, and structural defects.

NUMBER OF NEW HOUSES ERECTED DURING THE YEAR.

(a) Total (including numbers given separately under (b) )	...	...	162
(b) With State assistance under the Housing Acts :			
(i) By the Local Authority	...	...	150
(ii) By other bodies or persons	...	...	7

1.—*Inspection of Dwelling-houses during the Year.*

(1) Total number of dwelling-houses inspected for housing defects (under Public Health or Housing Acts)	478
(2) Number of dwelling-houses (included under sub-head (1) above) which were inspected and recorded under the Housing Consolidated Regulations, 1925	...	...	261
(3) Number of dwelling-houses found to be in a state so dangerous or injurious to health as to be unfit for human habitation...			34
(4) Number of dwelling-houses (exclusive of those referred to under the preceding sub-head) found not to be in all respects reasonably fit for human habitation	...	...	380

2.—*Remedy of Defects during the Year without Service of Formal Notices :—*

Number of defective dwelling-houses rendered fit in consequence of informal action by the Local Authority or their officers	...	120
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3.—*Action under Statutory Powers during the Year :—*

A—Proceedings under section 3 of the Housing Act, 1925 :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring repairs	...	...	163
(2) Number of dwelling-houses which were rendered fit after service of formal notices :—			
(a) By owners	...	...	63
(b) By L.A. in default of owners	...	...	—
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders became operative in pursuance of declarations by owners of intention to close (closed voluntarily after intended action)			25

B—Proceedings under Public Health Acts :

(1) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which notices were served requiring defects to be remedied	...	...	97
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in which defects were remedied after service of formal notices :—			
(a) By owners	...	...	51
(b) By Local Authority in default of owners	...	...	—

C—Proceedings under sections 11, 14, and 15 of the Housing Act, 1925 :

(1) Number of representations made with a view to the making of Closing Orders	...	...	9
(2) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were made	...	...	9
(3) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Closing Orders were determined, the dwelling-houses having been rendered fit	...	...	1
(4) Number of dwelling-houses in respect of which Demolition Orders were made	...	...	—
(5) Number of dwelling-houses demolished in pursuance of Demolition Orders	...	...	—

Inspector :—R. M. LAVERICK.		No. of Inspects during the year.	No. of Defects or Contraven- tions of Byc-Laws.	No. outsta'ding from last year.	TOTAL.	No. remedied after letter or interview.	No. of Informal Notices served.	Defects remedied thereafter	No. of Statutory Notices served.	In progress or being dealt with.
HOUSING.										
Structural Defects	...		147	79	226	122	25	89		15
Dampness	...		45	43	88	36	5	41		11
Not reasonably fit for Habitation	...		11		11		11	11		
Defective Spouting	...	217	60	31	91	34	7	26		31
Overcrowding	...		15		15	3	12	12		
Nuisances	...		39		39	39				
WATER SUPPLY.										
Insufficient	...	Nil.	Nil.							
Unsatisfactory	...									
DRAINAGE.										
Foul	...	165	44		44	44				
Untrapped or Defective	...		34		34	29	5	5		
Insufficient	...		6		6		6	6		
SANITARY CONVENIENCES.										
Structural Defects	...		138		138	121	17	17		
Insufficient	...	321	26		26	20	6	6		
Foul	...		45		45	45				
Dairies, Cowsheds and Milkshops	...	199	37	90	127	31	13	90		6
Slaughter Shops	...	212	7		7	7				
Tents, Vans, etc.	...	15	5		5	5				
Offensive Trades	...	39	2		2	2				
Workshops and Workplaces	...	117	7		7	7				
Keeping of Animals	...	16	16		16	16				
Insanitary Ashpits and Receptacles	...	164	112		112	101	3	11		
Ashpits improperly used	...	4	4		4	4				
Offensive Accumulations	...	51	21		21	21				
TOTALS		1520	821	243	1064	687	110	314		63

HEALTH VISITORS' REPORT.

To the Chairman and Members of the Bedlingtonshire U.D. Council.

Gentlemen,

The Annual Report for 1927, herewith submitted to you, is an outline of our work done for Maternity and Child Welfare.

Births registered	...	...	600
„ notified	...	...	523
„ not notified	...	...	41
Illegitimate births (included in total)—boys 8, girls 12	...	...	20
Stillbirths	...	...	24
Number of Children removed from Shire	...	...	28
„ „ transferred into Shire	...	...	20
Number of deaths registered under 1 year	...	...	61
„ „ „ „ 1 month	...	...	19
„ „ „ „ 1 week	...	...	15

This given an Infantile Mortality Rate of 101·6 per 1000.

Infectious Diseases notified.—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	96
Small Pox	...	...	26
Epidemic Diarrhoea (notifiable July, August, September)	...	...	19
Diphtheria	..	...	5
Ophthalmia (1 inward transfer)	...	...	3
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	6
Puerperal Fever	...	...	1

Visits.—

First visits to infants under 1 year	...	...	387
Total „ „ „ 1 year	...	...	1568
Visits to children—1 to 5 years	...	...	1130
Ante Natal visits	...	...	59

Visits to Infectious Cases.—

Scarlet Fever	...	...	117
Small Pox Contacts	...	...	260
Epidemic Diarrhoea	...	...	40
Diphtheria	...	...	12
Swabs from Diphtheria Contacts	...	...	13
Ophthalmia (with treatment)	...	...	41
Puerperal Pyrexia	...	...	6
Puerperal Fever	...	...	1
Other visits	...	...	79
Total of visits			3313

Attendances at the Ante Natal Clinic	...	78
„ „ Maternity and Child Welfare Centres		1501

Applications for Free Food considered during the year.—

Dried Milks granted free	...	1808 Pkts.
„ „ half-cost price	...	183 „
„ „ sold	...	7178 „
Vitamin products granted free	approx.	200 Lbs.
„ „ sold	...	638 „

Our grateful thanks are again due and most heartily given to all the lady members of the various Maternity and Child Welfare Committees for their continued and most helpful services.

We remain,

Yours obediently,

V. A. N. DAVIES, } Health
G. RISPIN, } Visitors.

**Causes of, and Ages at Death during the year
1927.**

		<p style="text-align: center;">Nett Deaths at the subjoined ages of "Residents" whether occurring within or without the District.</p>												
CAUSE OF DEATH.		Total.	Under 1 year.	1 & under 2 years.	2 & under 3 years.	3 & under 4 years.	4 & under 5 years.	5 & under 10 years.	10 & under 15 years.	15 & under 20 years.	20 & under 35 years.	35 & under 45 years.	45 & under 65 years.	65 years & over.
1 Enteric Fever ... ..	...	2								1	1			
2 Small Pox ... ..	...												
3 Measles ... ..	...												
4 Scarlet Fever ... ..	...												
5 Whooping Cough ... ..	...	1		1										
6 Diphtheria ... ..	...												
7 Influenza ... ..	...	12		2		1				1		1	2	5
8 Encephalitis Lethargica ... ..	...	2				1								1
9 Meningococcal Meningitis ... ..	...												
10 Tuberculosis of Respiratory System ... ..	...	24		1				1	2	3	11	1	3	2
11 Other Tuberculous Diseases ... ..	...	4			1	1		1				1		
12 Cancer, Malignant Disease ... ..	...	28							1			3	15	9
13 Rheumatic Fever ... ..	...	1											1	
14 Diabetes ... ..	...	3										1	1	
15 Cerebral Hemorrhage, etc. ... ..	...	17								1		1	5	11
16 Heart Disease ... ..	...	40	1					1			2	5	12	19
17 Arterio Sclerosis ... ..	...	12											4	8
18 Bronchitis ... ..	...	21	8	1									4	8
19 Pneumonia (all forms) ... ..	...	52	19	16	1	3		1			2		5	5
20 Other Respiratory Diseases ... ..	...	4											2	2
21 Ulcer of Stomach—Duodenum ... ..	...	1											1	
22 Diarrhœa, etc. (under 2 yrs.) ... ..	...	3	1	2										
23 Appendicitis & Syphilis ... ..	...	1								1				
24 Cirrhosis of Liver ... ..	...												
25 Acute Chronic Nephritis ... ..	...	10									2		4	4
26 Puerperal Sepsis ... ..	...												
27 Other accidents & diseases of Pregnancy & Parturition ... ..	...	1	1											
28 Congenital Debility & Malformation, Premature Birth ... ..	...	17	17											
29 Suicide ... ..	...	1											1	
30 Other Deaths from Violence ... ..	...	19				1		3		2	5	3	2	3
31 Other Defined Diseases ... ..	...	61	10	4	1		1				2		11	32
32 Causes ill-defined or unknown ... ..	...	5	4		1									
TOTALS ... ..	...	342	61	27	4	7	1	7	3	8	26	16	73	109

During the year 7 uncertified deaths were registered,

